

**SLEEP**—Marie Carmichael Stopes, Doctor of Science, London. Philosophical Library, New York, 1956. 154 pages, \$3.00.

An amusing combination of fact and fancy, of science and fiction, of knowledge and folklore on the subject of sleep. Foam rubber mattresses are described as "pernicious" because they "cut you off from electric currents of the earth with which you should be in contact."

The reader is warned to place his bed in a north-south direction lest magnetic currents cause a subconscious disturbance that interferes with sleep—as has occurred to the author.

Among a long list of Do's and Don'ts, one is cautioned to avoid foods like lobster salad which "may strain the digestion with sufficient extra work to stimulate the consciousness a little (and) turn dreams into seminightmares.

The passing of the bedroom chamber pot is bemoaned as an important cause of the current increase of sleeplessness.

It is difficult to tell if the book were written seriously or with "tongue in cheek." In any case it will not be a help to physicians who treat insomnia or patients who suffer from it.

NORMAN Q. BRILL, M.D.

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**ESSENTIALS OF CLINICAL PROCTOLOGY**—Third Edition—Manuel G. Spiesman, M.D., B.S., LL.D., F.I.C.P., Associate Professor of Proctology; and Louis Malow, M.D., B.S., F.A.C.S., Associate in Surgery, both from the Chicago Medical School. Grune & Stratton, New York, 1957. 316 pages, \$8.75.

This work, with 36 chapter titles listing most of the common subjects in the anorectal area of Proctology (major surgery of the rectum and colon is not included) has been revised three times since its first appearance in 1946. This would seem to testify either to the general interest in this field or to the excellence of the book.

It is intended to present "...in outline form, only the essentials... from simplified embryology and anatomy to pre-operative and postoperative proctologic care." It is an outgrowth of lectures on diseases of the anus, rectum and colon given to medical and postgraduate students. The present edition has added chapters on the injection treatment of hemorrhoids, pediatric proctology, steps and illustrations in the performance of sigmoidoscopic examination, a chapter on ulcerative colitis and hydradenitis suppurativa as well as revised ones on postoperative complications, histopathologic classification of polyps, coccygodynia and proctalgia fugax.

The volume is not intended to be encyclopedic but is based, rather, on the personal experience of the authors and therein lies its chief claim to helpfulness as a text. While more comprehensive publications are more complete in their exposition, they may tend to be dispassionate, impersonal and undiscriminating in their views. The specialist in proctology will almost certainly find points with which he disagrees in several chapters while the uninitiated may accept more readily the methods set forth. However, the nonspecialist at least will have something tangible with which to work without the necessity of assaying a more extensive arbeits. This is not to say, of course, that the bulk of the book is controversial for most of the material is well established.

In the field of controversy is the subject of "The Pecten Band, Pectenosis and Pectenotomy," a topic in which the authors are particularly interested and to which they have devoted a disproportionately large chapter considering the brevity with which many other subjects are dealt. The existence of pectenosis as a clinical entity is not accepted by a large number of proctologists.

There are many other points of classification, interpretation and therapy with which some proctologists will find themselves in disagreement.

The sections on Pediatric Proctology, operative repair of procidentia, the simpler methods of repairing the incontinent anus and the treatment of malignancy, among others, are inadequate and incomplete.

However, the subjects of cystitis, papillitis, abscess, ano-rectal fistula, hemorrhoids, pruritus ani, tuberculosis, venereal diseases, polyps, coccygodynia, pilonidal disease and constipation are all dealt with in light of the authors' extensive experience over a period of thirty years with varying degrees of brevity but containing the essentials in good teaching form as is the intent of the book.

The diagrams, pictures and colored plates have been chosen with discrimination, are liberal in number and are forceful.

WALTER BIRNBAUM, M.D.

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**GIFFORD'S TEXTBOOK OF OPHTHALMOLOGY**—Sixth Edition—Francis Heed Adler, M.D., William F. Norris and George E. DeSchweinitz, Professor of Ophthalmology, University of Pennsylvania Medical School. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1957. 499 pages, 277 figures and 26 color plates, \$8.00.

The fact that this is the sixth edition of a book written by Gifford and published for the first time in 1938 bears out Dr. Adler's contention that the book has been a satisfactory textbook for medical students and general practitioners. It avoids details that are found in so many smaller books supposedly published for the same purpose. Certain details which necessitate a rather intimate knowledge of ophthalmology have been omitted, and the book deals primarily in the problems of ophthalmology, injuries and diagnoses which are of interest to medical students and general practitioners.

Dr. Adler has edited the book for a sufficient number of editions that it is no longer entirely Dr. Gifford's book, but is a combination of the writings of two of our most outstanding ophthalmologists.

The format, printing and illustrations are up to the usual Saunders' standard. The book is highly recommended as an outstanding volume for medical students and all physicians wishing information on ophthalmology without the details found in the textbooks for ophthalmologists.

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**RYPINS' MEDICAL LICENSURE EXAMINATIONS—Topical Summaries and Questions**—8th Edition—Walter L. Bierring, M.D., M.A.C.P., M.R.C.P., Edin. (Hon.), J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1957. 964 pages, \$10.00.

The eighth edition of this book maintains the same arrangement as the previous editions. It provides a compact, concise and orderly presentation of the various fields of medicine as an aid in reviewing for licensure and other examinations.

The seventh edition was reviewed in CALIFORNIA MEDICINE, 78:834, April 1953.

In this recent volume there is a short opening article on Medical Qualifying Examinations in which the objective multiple-choice written examinations are discussed and examples of questions given. There are small changes in wording and phraseology throughout the book. Here and there deletion of obsolete ideas and addition of new material occurs. The fact that allergy is no longer invoked as an etiological factor in collagen diseases, the elimination of external pelvimetry as a necessary procedure in obstetrics, and the mention of Salk vaccine are examples of the up-to-date revision of the text.

This book is abreast of present-day knowledge in the medical world and continues to hold its place as an excellent aid to the student who is preparing for examinations in both the basic medical sciences and the clinical sciences. It is also of value to the examiner in preparing examination questions.